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Analysis / Leslie H. Gelb

Political Shift Illustrated by Moderates' Departure

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WASHINGTON, July 23 — In recent weeks, the three officials generally regarded as the most moderate voices in the National Security Council have left Government, each a man with impressive military credentials.

Their departure is a stark example of just how far the political center of gravity has shifted since the Carter Administration. It is also a reminder of just how steady and deep institutional roots run in Washington, beneath shifting political fashions.

The three officials, Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr., Gen. David C. Jones, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, the deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, were classified as conservatives in the Carter Administration. In the Reagan Administration they were classified as moderates, a shift that eventually became an element in the departures of Mr. Haig and Admiral Inman.



United Press International
Alexander M. Haig Jr.

It was not unusual in the last year and a half to hear White House officials or political appointees in the Defense Department express a certain mistrust of them. They were often viewed as having divided loyalties, to their institutions rather than to the President. The political men of the Administration were never quite comfortable with them despite their military backgrounds, traditionally a good conservative credential.

There was trouble from the outset.

Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger wanted to cut short General Jones's second two-year term as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because the general had recommended Senate approval of the second strategic arms limitation treaty. The general had also supported the Panama Canal treaty, much to the dismay of the Republican right wing.

Mr. Weinberger, however, was persuaded to keep General Jones on the job because of the uproar caused by rumors of his impending dismissal; the Secretary and White House officials reportedly did not want to put themselves in a position of being accused of politicizing the military.

In any event, General Jones stayed on for a full second term and for regular retirement, and he became an advocate of beginning talks with the Soviet Union on medium-range missiles in Europe at a time when the political appointees in the Pentagon were against such negotiations.



Associated Press
Adm. Bobby Ray Inman

What actually changed was not the three men's views, but the political climate in Washington.

In the inner councils of the Reagan Administration, the three men were the main advocates of arms control talks with the Soviet Union, of a less devilish theory of Soviet behavior, of more tolerance in dealing with the world as it is. As a result, they and the institutions they represented were often out of step with the hard-line approach of the White House.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff had been an intimate party to past discussions with the United States's European allies on that subject. Like the officials in the State Department who participated in the discussions, the chiefs knew that the Europeans would not agree to the deployment of new American medium-range missiles in Europe unless arms control talks with Moscow were under way. It was a matter of European politics that the American military understood, even though the point had not quite sunk in with the new Reagan officials.

General Jones and the other chiefs also joined forces with Mr. Haig and the State Department in arguing that the terms of the arms limitation treaty should be observed, even though Mr. Reagan and those close to him had pronounced the treaty sorely deficient.

In all of these cases, General Jones and Secretary Haig had greater command of the facts and the diplomatic histories. They carried the day each time with President Reagan.

They were less successful in other matters. For example, while both men and their institutions worried about the growth of Soviet military power, neither was prepared to argue that the United States was in a position of military inferiority. Soviet military superiority was an article of faith with the Reagan team.

General Jones and Mr. Haig essentially restricted themselves to arguing that in some respects the Soviets had the advantage but that in other respects the United States and the Western powers were still better off. They emphasized "adverse trends" in the military balance rather than current inferiority. They were often joined in this view by Admiral Inman and the professionals of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Admiral Inman also proved a thorn in the side of the Reagan Administration with his repeated opposition to efforts by Reagan political appointees to expand the role of the C.I.A. to include certain kinds of domestic spying. Like most senior C.I.A. officials over the years, he had respect for covert operations only under carefully controlled conditions, and he had a sense of their limitations.

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Mr. Haig was influenced by both his years as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and by the professional Foreign Service officers at the State Department. Thus, he became the champion in Cabinet councils of seeing the European point of view and insuring that the United States somehow got along with most nations. These have been the steady goals of the Army and the Foreign Service, and they put him at odds with other senior figures in the Reagan Administration.

George P. Shultz, who replaced Mr. Haig, has wide experience in Washington, but his roots are in business and academia, not in foreign and national security policy.



United Press International
Gen. David C. Jones

Gen. John W. Vessey Jr. has taken over from General Jones, and John N. McMahon from Admiral Inman. Unlike their predecessors, Mr. McMahon and General Vessey have not been operating continuously for years in high-level policy positions in Washington; they have not been through the Washington policy wars of the last decade. Mr. McMahon is known as a superb manager and General Vessey as a first-rate field soldier.

So, while cautious institutional views will still be heard around the table at National Security Council meetings, they are not likely to have quite the same force as in the last 18 months, and there almost certainly will be somewhat less restraint on what the political leadership wants to do.

Glossary

On the Record: This means that the person who is briefing, or being interviewed, may be quoted by name and title. The remarks may also be summarized or paraphrased in a manner that retains true intent and meaning and attributed to the person without the use of direct quotations. *Common usage:* Mr. John Doe, Director of the Department of such and such, said today, "that...."

Background: This is probably the most common basis on which government officials talk to journalists, because it permits them to describe facts and policy more fully than they can on the record. *No attribution* is permitted to either a *name* or a *specific title*. It is also important to remember that the official may not necessarily be speaking on behalf of anyone else. Therefore, a background comment cannot be attributed to a department, an Administration or a government. In each case, at the beginning of a briefing or an interview, the ground rules should be established as to how the source is to be identified. *Common usage:* "A U.S. official said," "a senior State Department official confirmed today."

Deep Background: While this rule permits an official a greater degree of frankness it also requires the journalist to assume a greater personal degree of responsibility for what he or she writes *since there is no identifiable source* for the material. When a briefing or an interview is on deep background, *nothing* is to be attributed to the source. In all cases at a briefing or an interview, the official should explain his or her views on the term deep background. *Common usage:* "it is known that," "it is believed that," "it has been learned that" or "the current Administration is said to believe that..."

Off the Record: The flat rule is that the material is *not for publication*, it is solely for the reporter's private knowledge. The off the record interview or briefing is most commonly used by officials to advise reporters of something that is going to happen so that they have the background or information necessary for planning purposes to cover the event when it does occur. For example, an official may explain that the Secretary of State is going to the Far East on a given date and that he will be talking about specific topics. The reporter cannot print that news since it is off the record, but he or she can make plans to follow along on the same trip and to report on the speeches and press conferences that the Secretary of State may hold. *Common usage:* none, no use permitted.

Embargo: Quite often, printed material is prepared and distributed to the media in advance of a major speech or important news conference. The material generally provides additional information on a subject, usually in greater detail than will be presented at the briefing or during the speech. If this material is distributed under an "embargo," it means that it cannot be broadcast or appear in print before the time indicated. However, a print or broadcast journalist may prepare it and phone or telex it to his or her medium with the understanding that the medium will not use it before the embargoed time.

The above explanations apply usually to federal government officials and business leaders you may also be interviewing throughout the United States, but they are not used much by them; most people either speak naturally for the record or, more unusually, they will ask you merely not to quote them. The rules of common sense should guide you.